

Sexual Harassment in the Workplace: What Every Teen Should Know

Goals:

- Teens will recognize sexual harassment in the workplace and be able to respond appropriately.
- Teens will be less likely to harass others.

Short Description:

This workshop presents information about sexual harassment in a format accessible for youth and builds the skills of adolescents in recognizing and responding to sexual harassment.

Learning Objectives:

After participating in this workshop, teens will:

- Understand the difference between flirting behavior and sexual harassment;
- Know that sexual harassment is illegal;
- Have identified steps to take if they or their friends experience sexual harassment.

Audience:

Teens (middle or high school aged)

Instructor Qualifications:

- An understanding of the law regarding sexual harassment;
- Know how to build an open and trusting training relationship with teens.

Length:

1 hour-1.25 hours

Materials:

Agree and Disagree, signs
Sexual Harassment versus Flirting handout
 Scenario for Discussion Handout
 Sexual Harassment Fact Sheet
 Markers/pens/pencils

Evaluation: Survey Questions for Pre and Post-test

Workshop Outline:

Section	Suggested Time
Welcome & Introductions	5-10 minutes
Boundaries	10 minutes
Causes of Sexual Harassment	10 minutes
Defining Sexual Harassment	15 Minutes
Types of Workplace Sexual Harassment	10 minutes
Responding to Sexual Harassment	20 minutes
Conclusion	5 minutes

Pre-test: If you wish to collect information about changes due to participating in the workshop, before you begin have students fill out the survey questions (attached at the end of this workshop). Collect the sheets and have them fill out new survey sheets at the end of the workshop.

Part 1: Welcome and Introductions

5-10 minutes

Purpose: To provide a safe, comfortable environment for youth to discuss harassment.

Activity 1: Facilitator(s) begin the workshop by introducing themselves if needed; explaining the purpose of the workshop; its length; and the kinds of activities that the participants will be asked to do.

Suggestion: If there is time, include an icebreaker before introducing the partner to partner activity, especially if people do not know each other.

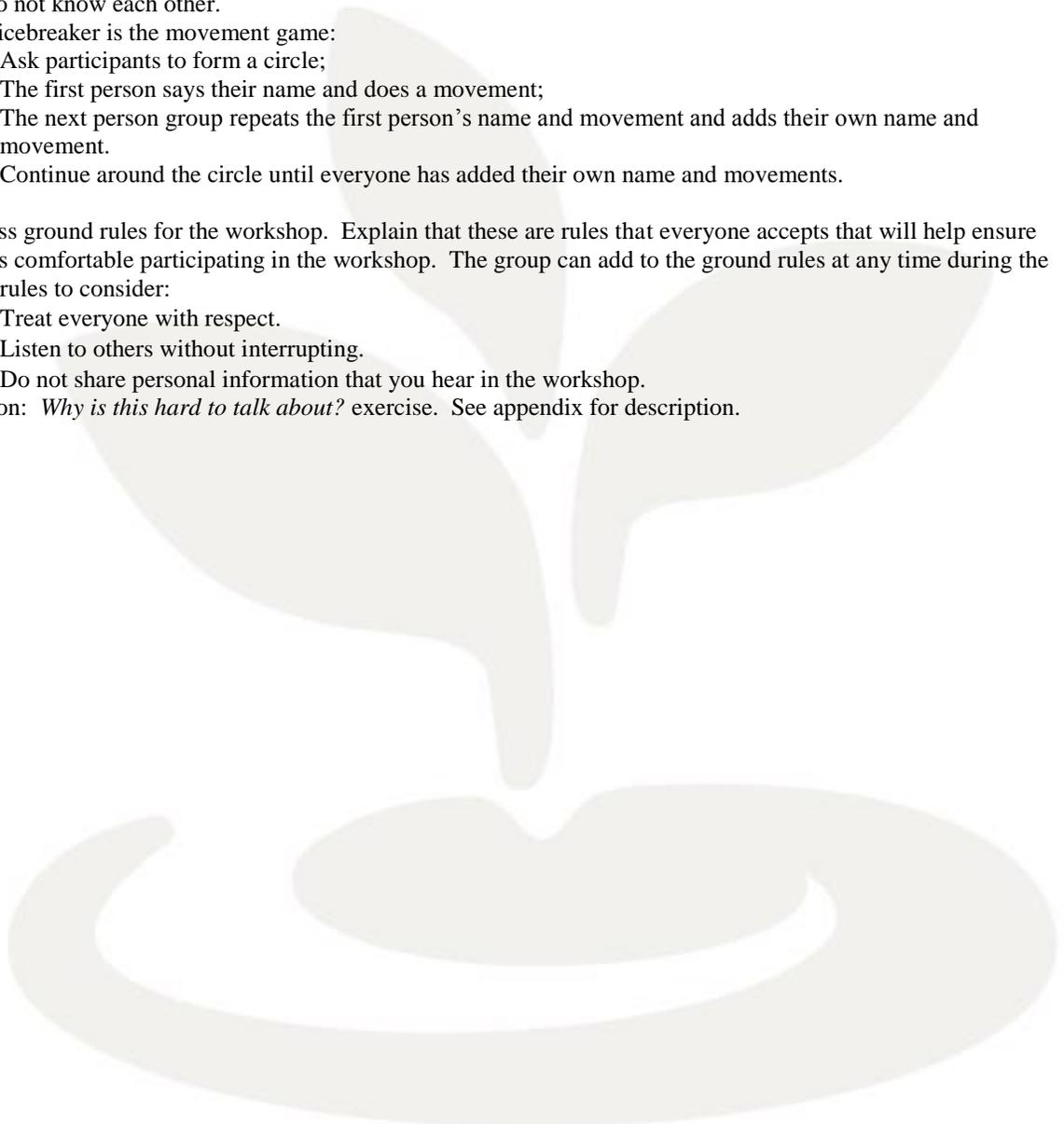
An easy icebreaker is the movement game:

1. Ask participants to form a circle;
2. The first person says their name and does a movement;
3. The next person group repeats the first person's name and movement and adds their own name and movement.
4. Continue around the circle until everyone has added their own name and movements.

Activity 2: Discuss ground rules for the workshop. Explain that these are rules that everyone accepts that will help ensure that everyone feels comfortable participating in the workshop. The group can add to the ground rules at any time during the workshop. Some rules to consider:

- Treat everyone with respect.
- Listen to others without interrupting.
- Do not share personal information that you hear in the workshop.

Suggestion: *Why is this hard to talk about?* exercise. See appendix for description.



Part 2: Boundaries

10 min

Purpose: To introduce the concepts of recognizing our own and other people's boundaries, comfort zones, and individual differences.

Preparing to lead this activity:

Make sure that the participants are in a space where they can move freely.

Activity: *Partner to Partner*

1. Ask everyone find a partner and to indicate once they have done so, either by raising their hands or linking their arms together.
2. Explain that you will be calling out different positions for them to form with their partner, such as "elbow to elbow" which means that the partners should touch their elbows together. Ask everyone to show you "elbow to elbow."
3. Tell them that there is one other action that they should be aware of and that is "partner to partner." When you call this out they must find a new partner as quickly as they can. They cannot partner with the same person more than once.
4. Begin calling out positions at a somewhat rapid speed. Examples of positions are "elbow to elbow," "finger to finger," "knee to toe," "palm to palm," etc. After calling out three to five positions call out "partner to partner." You may need to remind them that means they should switch partners, and quickly!
5. Once they've found new partners begin calling out positions again. Wait until they've switched partners several times before calling out "face to face, neck to neck, or nose to nose." It is best to end on "nose to nose," because they usually have VERY strong reactions to that position and likely need a break at this point. Be prepared for shouting, laughing, and comments indicating that they were not comfortable or happy about "nose to nose." Do not force them to do any of the positions that they are uncomfortable with.
6. Discussion:
 - Were there any positions that made you uncomfortable?
Typical responses include: that nose to nose, neck to neck, backside to backside, and anything that brings their faces or mouths close together.
 - What about it was uncomfortable?
Typical responses include: I don't know the person; the person was of the opposite sex; the person was of the same sex; it was just "too close;" it was like kissing.
 - Did you know when your partner was uncomfortable? How?
 - How did you let your partner know that you were uncomfortable?
Typical responses include: looking away, moving away, nervous laughter, body language, making eye contact, not making eye contact, saying "no" or other verbal cues.
 - Did anyone try to find a friend during the partner switch? Why? Who would you have been more comfortable doing this game with?
The person I am dating, my best friend, my cousins, etc.
 - What else has an impact on our comfort when it comes to personal space?
Typical responses include: gender, age, relationship with person, cultural background, behavior, etc.
 - Would people would have been comfortable playing this game with their boss, supervisor, or coworkers?
Responses might include: it's inappropriate to touch co-workers or for someone in a position of authority to touch their employee in some of those ways because if the employee is uncomfortable they might not feel that they can do anything about it without losing their job.

Key Points:

- Every person has a comfort zone and that they can become aware of how they know when they are uncomfortable.
- Their comfort changes if the context (person, environment) changes.
- They are aware of many ways to tell if someone else is uncomfortable.

Part 3: Cause of Sexual Harassment

10 min

Purpose: To have participants question their own thinking about the causes of sexual harassment.

Preparing to lead this activity:

Have a big enough space for everyone to stand and move around. Prepare *Agree* and *Disagree* signs and put them up on opposite sides of the room.

Materials:

Signs

Activity: *Whose Behavior is the Problem?*

1. The facilitator explains that each person should move to the area that matches his or her response to the following statements. People who are not sure can stay in the middle of the room.

Some people dress in tight clothing. If they are harassed, it is partly their fault.

Some people act very friendly to others, even people they don't know well. If they are harassed, it is partly their fault.

Some people talk about sex a lot. If they are harassed, it is partly their fault.

2. After each statement is read, call on volunteers to explain why they chose to agree or disagree or why they are unsure. Allow them to move to a different response based on others' comments. Ask why they changed their minds.
3. Discussion:

Allow the participants to voice their views. Emphasize these issues by questioning the participants and encouraging them to challenge their thinking.

- Sample questions: Why would the way someone was dressed/acted give someone else permission to call them names or touch them? Who is the person crossing the boundaries of the other? Which person is being disrespectful?
- Everyone has a choice about their own actions and is responsible for their own behavior. Hurting someone else is a choice.
- No one deserves to be treated with disrespect. You cannot assume that people who dress or look a certain way are asking for sexual attention.

Suggestion: Ask: what are some reasons that someone might dress in the way described above?

Typical responses include: they like someone; they want attention; that's what is in style.

- Harassing someone can make the other person so uncomfortable that they change what they are doing in order to avoid the harassment. Some people use harassment to control other people.
 - Harassment by someone who has power over you (employer, manager, teacher) is illegal.
4. Conclude the activity by asking participants to say some things that they learned. Examples might be:
 - Other people think differently about this issue than I do.
 - If someone chooses to hurt someone else because of the way they are dressed, it is disrespectful.
 - Harassing someone is a way to try to control them.

Key Points:

- People often excuse harassment by saying that the victim did something to deserve the harassment.
- No one deserves to be called names or bullied because of who they are or the way that they look.

Part 4: Defining Sexual Harassment

15 min

Purpose: To provide an opportunity for the participants to clarify their definition of sexual harassment as a non-consensual, non-mutual behavior.

Preparing to Lead this Activity:

Materials and Equipment:

Flirting or Sexual Harassment worksheets
Pens or pencils.

Activity: *Flirting or Sexual Harassment?*

1. Divide the participants into groups of 3- 5 people and give one worksheet to each group.
2. Ask them to list examples of flirting or of sexual harassment. They can list either behaviors like *staring* or *whistling* or adjectives like *icky* or *scary*.
3. Bring the participants back together and ask the small groups to act out/share their examples.

Discussion:

Were any of the examples for flirting the same as for sexual harassment?

How can you tell the difference?

Examples: it made me afraid, it wasn't mutual, the context, etc.

It's important to stress that flirting is consensual(wanted) and sexual harassment is not.

Alternative activity:

1. *Break into small groups. Some groups receive a "flirting" worksheet and some receive a "sexual harassment" worksheet.*
2. *Ask the groups to write down examples of the topic that they were given (flirting or SH) and to be ready to act it out in front of the other groups. The skits should have at least three people, two people doing the behavior on the worksheet and one person who is noticing the interaction. The group can decide whether the third person will intervene or not (for example, one group might have two friends walking by and one person harassing/flirting with the other and the third person could say something or not).*
3. *When the group reconvenes as a large group, each small group will act out their skits. Participants say whether they thought that the behavior was SH or flirting.*

Discussion:

If it was a SH scenario: What made you think it was SH?

Typical responses: one person crossed the other person's boundaries; too close; the other person looked uncomfortable; one person had more power.

If it was a flirting scenario:

What made you think it was flirting?

Typical responses: they looked happy; there didn't seem to be a power difference; the friends didn't do anything.

Often the behaviors in the skits will look similar whether it is flirting or sexual harassment. Stress that the factor that differentiates them is whether it was wanted or consensual.

A common question is: What if I'm just paying compliments or trying to flirt with the other person? Ask them to think back to the opening "partner to partner" activity. Ask them if they could tell when their partner was uncomfortable. Most people can tell when they are making someone uncomfortable and if they are, it could be sexual harassment which is illegal.

Key Points:

- Most people are able to use others' reactions to tell whether their behavior is consensual or harassing.
- If someone is not sure whether their behavior is wanted by the other person, they might be harassing the other and should stop the behavior.



Part 5: Types of Workplace Sexual Harassment

10 min

Purpose: Participants will understand that sexual harassment in the workplace is illegal.

Preparing to Lead this Activity:

- Need to understand the law about sexual harassment.
- You can prepare flipchart paper with definitions and statistics before the presentation or write as you present.

Materials and Equipment: Markers and flipchart paper.

Activity: Presentation

Two kinds of sexual harassment are recognized by law:

1. *Quid Pro Quo* (Latin for “this for that”):

Someone, usually in a position of power, asks for sexual activity that can range from a kiss to sexual intercourse in exchange for some form of benefit. For example: a promotion, a good grade, a raise.

2. *Hostile Environment:*

A condition created when someone engages in unwelcome sexual behavior that creates an offensive, hostile or intimidating working environment. (For example: sexual notes, pictures or jokes; touching, pinching or grabbing body parts; being cornered, forced to kiss someone or coerced to do something sexual; suggestive sexual gestures, remarks, looks)

3. *Some facts about sexual harassment:*

- Approximately 13,000 cases of sexual harassment are brought to the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC) each year¹.
- 35 percent of about 300 high school students surveyed said they were subjected to sexual harassment at work; more than 60 percent of the harassed respondents were teenage girls.²
 - Suggestion: Translate this into what it means for the group. Have a third of the group stand up.
- Most students (81 percent) will experience some form of sexual harassment during their school lives, with 27 percent experiencing it often³.
- *Many cases of sexual harassment go unreported.*⁴
Suggestion: Ask the group why someone might not report harassment.

¹ The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. (2009). Sexual Harassment Charges, Retrieved July 15, 2009 from <http://www.eeoc.gov/stats/harass.html>.

² Chanen, J. (2008). New Troubles for Teens at Work. ABA Journal, 94(4), 22-23. Retrieved June 26, 2009, from Academic Search Complete database.

³ American Association of University Women Educational Foundation. (2004). *Harassment-Free Hallways: How to Stop Sexual Harassment in Schools*. Washington, D.C.: Author.

⁴ Jane Doe Inc. (2008). *Supporting Survivors of Sexual Assault: A Journey to Justice, Health, and Healing*. Boston: Author. “In a survey of 9,000 clerical and professional women, **92 percent** of the respondents experienced overt physical harassment, sexual remarks, and leering, with the majority regarding this behavior as a serious problem at work; nearly **50 percent** said they or someone they knew had quit or been fired because of sexual harassment; **75 percent** believed that if they complained to a supervisor, nothing would be done.”

Typical responses include: fear of retaliatory violence, might lose their job, people will talk about them behind their back.

Cases are unreported for many reasons, including: fear of not being believed, retaliation by the harasser, fear of losing a job or benefits, self-blame, not wanting to get the harasser in trouble, and not knowing how to report the harassment.

Sexual harassment can occur in any relationship. Coaches, teachers, supervisors, and other students can harass or be harassed.⁵

Key Points:

- *Sexual harassment is illegal when it occurs in school or in workplaces.*
- *Many people do not report it when it occurs.*



⁵ AAUWEF, *Harassment-Free Hallways: How to Stop Sexual Harassment in Schools*.

“Nearly nine in 10 students (85 percent) report that students harass other students at their schools. Almost 40 percent of students report that teachers and other school employees sexually harass students in their schools.”

Part 6: Responding to Sexual Harassment

20 minutes

Purpose: For participants to think about how they could respond to a sexual harassment incident and to give examples of effective and appropriate responses.

Preparing to lead this activity:

Materials and Equipment:

Either handouts or posters (if participants are reading the scenario/options)

Activity: Scenarios

1. Ask for volunteers to read scenario and train of thought:

Your supervisor at work is always making comments to some of your coworkers about the way they look and even sending them text messages when they're not at work. Sometimes it seems like they might like it because they smile or laugh, but sometimes you can tell that they are uncomfortable with the looks they get from him/her or the things said to them.

Train of Thought:

"Is what my supervisor doing considered sexual harassment? Should I say something to about it? I don't want to get in trouble or lose my job by questioning the actions of my supervisor, but it doesn't seem fair that my coworkers should be made to feel uncomfortable. What can I do?"

2. Discussion:

- Does this sound real to you?
- Have you seen this or something like this before? Either in your life or heard about it from friends or family, or seen it on TV/movies?
- Ask for volunteers to share their experiences with sexual harassment

Suggestion: If people are hesitant about sharing, tell a story that you have heard or that you have experienced to get the ball rolling. If no one has anything to share, move on to options.

Typical responses: stories about family members or friends. Make sure to let them know either at the beginning with ground rules or before you open it up, that people should not use names of people or businesses when they give examples to maintain privacy.

3. What are your options?

Ask for a volunteer to read the options:

- *Say nothing and ignore it.*
- *Ask your coworkers who are being harassed how they feel about your supervisor's comments and tell them it's not their fault.*
- *Give your coworkers resources/information about sexual harassment in the workplace.*
- *Tell _____ (an adult you can trust) about what's going on at work and ask them for help.*
- *Talk to you supervisor about the comments and let him/her know it's making you uncomfortable.*
- *Report your supervisor's actions to another supervisor or someone of higher authority at work.*
- *Personal Option: _____*

4. Discussion:

Which options look best for you?

- If people aren't speaking up or if they only share one option you can go down the list and ask if anyone picked number one, number two, etc.
- If no one picked a certain option, you can ask why not and do a pro/con list.
- Typically no one volunteers that they picked "tell an adult" but if you ask if anyone picked that one, you will get some hands. Explain that even though it isn't fair, adults are often more likely to be listened to and believed than teens.

5. Ask them to take a moment and think of an adult that they can trust.

Suggestion: Before the workshop ask the agency or school who teens can talk to there about these issues (youth worker, school guidance counselor, HR person, etc) and make sure to let the teens know of those resources.

KEY POINTS:

- People will respond more appropriately to harassment if they have thought about it and talked to others.
- Most people can think of a way to respond that is safe and appropriate.
- Everyone should identify an adult that they trust who they could talk to about harassment that they are experiencing or witnessing.



Part 7: Conclusion

5 minutes

Purpose: To end training

Preparing to lead the activity:

Materials needed:

BARCC brochures.

Activity: Presentation

- Ask the participants if they have any lingering questions about the workshop.
- Answer any questions that you deferred to the end.
- Describe BARCC's services and that they can go to the website or call the hotline for more information or support.
- Distribute brochures/postcards if appropriate.

Post-test: If you wish to collect information about changes due to participating in the workshop, have students fill out the survey questions. Collect the sheets and compare them to the sheets filled out before they participated in the workshop.



Appendix I: Why is this hard to talk about?

Purpose:

1. To normalize common reactions to discussions of sexual violence
2. To build empathy for survivors
3. To connect teens to the issue of sexual violence

Time: 5-10 minutes

Activity:

1. Explain that today's workshop is NOT a lecture. It will rely heavily on their participation in different activities and discussions but that we recognize that talking about sex and violence and sexual violence is sometimes uncomfortable. Our goal is to have an honest conversation about these things that feels as safe and comfortable as possible.
2. Ask teens to raise their hands if they feel comfortable talking to their friends about the following things:
 - Music
 - Sports
 - Their parents
 - Dating relationships
 - "Partying" **most teens use this language to mean alcohol and drug use in social situations.*
 - Problems they are having at school
 - Sexual violence
3. This activity varies by audience. If you are working with a group of peer leaders they might raise their hands for everything where as a general group of teens might not raise their hands for any of them. You can change the topics based on what you already know about the audience. For example, if you are working with a group of SADD (students against drunk driving) students you could ask about "Drinking and driving" and they would probably all raise their hands.
4. Very few, if any, teens will raise their hands when you ask about sexual violence. Ask teens why they didn't raise their hands for "sexual violence." What makes it more difficult to talk about than some of the other stuff they talk about with their friends? *Common responses include: I don't know that much about it, I don't want to offend anybody, it is scary, it feels out of my control, it's taboo, people don't talk about sex in school, I don't want to be reminded of what happened to me/my family member/my friend or I don't want to remind someone else in the room of what happened to them, it's embarrassing, it's shameful, I don't want to be judged, I don't want people to talk about me later.*
5. Write teens responses on the board. If someone does bring up it being out of your control circle it as we will come back to that later in the workshop.

6. Ask the teens to keep all of those reasons in mind and to come up with ground rules for today's workshop. For example, if we don't like talking about this because it's embarrassing what rules can we keep in mind during our conversation today? Teens might say, "no laughing or making fun of each other." *Other common responses include: be respectful, listen to one another, only speak for yourself, don't use names, ask questions, what's said in here stays in here**

*At this point you should explain your role as a mandated reporter to the group.



Appendix II: Sexual Harassment in the Workplace: What every teen should know
PRE/POST Test

	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Somewhat Disagree 3	Somewhat Agree 4	Agree 5	Strongly Agree 6
1. I know when my behavior is making someone else uncomfortable.						
2. Some people ask for harassment by what they wear or how they act.						
3. Sexual harassment is against the law.						
4. If I was being harassed, I know what I could do.						
5. If I saw or heard someone else being harassed, I know what I could do.						
6. If I was being harassed or saw or heard someone else being harassed, I know an adult to talk to about it.						
7. If I saw or heard someone else being harassed, I would do something to help them.						